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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 14, 2006

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WOMAN SENTENCED FOR PASSING COUNTERFEIT TRAVELERS CHECKS

Lisa Godbey Wood, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today that defendant Connie Ann Copeland was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Savannah by Chief U.S. District Judge William T. Moore, Jr. Copeland had earlier pled guilty to two counts of passing counterfeit travelers checks at two stores located on River Street in Savannah, Georgia. As part of her fraudulent scheme, Copeland selected small dollar items at River Street shops and used counterfeit travelers checks in increments of \$100.00 and a false identification to pay for the goods. By purchasing only small dollar items, Copeland was able to receive back from the victim merchants almost the entire face amount of the counterfeit travelers checks in United States Currency.

Copeland, age 55, was sentenced to 30 months imprisonment, 3 years of supervised release, a \$200.00 special assessment, and restitution in the amount of \$1303.27. Copeland's 30-month sentence was a significant upward departure from the 9-15 month range of imprisonment suggested by the United States Sentencing Guidelines. The Court departed upward in the

sentence based upon Copeland's significant criminal history, which included five forgery convictions, five theft convictions, five shoplifting convictions, and two fraud convictions.

The case was investigated by the United States Secret Service and Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department. The United States was represented by Assistant United States Attorney Robert M. Brennan.

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